UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

# SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

# Etica della Relazione: Teorie e Pratiche

**2526-2-F8501R035**

## Course title

Paths of trust. Philosophical and pedagogical categories.

## Topics and course structure

Trust is the element in which educational action is produced. But what do we mean when we speak of trust and what specificities does it assume when referring to the educational field? Trust is often reduced to an implicit and unquestioned presupposition, most often conceived as a precondition on the basis of prejudiced moral assumptions. The course - moving with a philosophical slant and with constant attention to pedagogical implications and applications - shows instead that trust can and must be subjected to a critical reflection that analyses it from several perspectives: cultural, social and relational.
Trust is not a preliminary assumption, it is a path. If trust is maintained over time, it does so without guarantees. That is, it stands the test of time through its reverses: risk, uncertainty, misunderstanding, lies. And yet, the time of trust is projected into an open future, neither predetermined nor guaranteed and which, however unpredictable, is not frightening.

## Objectives

The aim of this course in relational ethics is to provide the student with the theoretical tools required to read educational phenomena and relationships – with educational consultancy and coordination roles in mind – and with a focus on ethics.

Specific learning objectives:
*Knowledge and understanding*

The first objective is to accustom students to a style of inquiry suited to critically analysing the categories of thought that explicitly or implicitly underpin discourses in the human sciences and the associated research practices and forms of intervention. Students will be led to recognize and problematize the interpretive approaches and conceptual distinctions underpinning understandings of the world in real-life contexts.

Application of knowledge and understanding*

The second objective is to help students develop the capacity to reflect on the less obvious, and thus even more crucial, assumptions underlying their actions (whether theoretical or practical) in typical educational situations and settings. The expected learning outcome is enhanced awareness of the horizons of meaning that come into play in diverse sociocultural contexts and the main cognitive and normative structures underpinning mutual expectations in educational settings, which in turn will inform educational action.

*Transferable learning outcomes*

The third objective is to enhance students' capacity to revisit and organize their knowledge, using their own independent judgement, while attending to underlying concepts, the layers of semantic meaning implicit in key terms, the logical-formal structure of arguments, and different possible regimes of truth.

## Methodologies

Roughly all the training activities envisaged in the 56 hours are carried out in the classroom.
Teaching with face-to-face hours and laboratory activities:

- 15 3-hour lectures delivered in face-to-face delivery mode
- 4 3-hour tutorials conducted in face-to-face interactive mode

Specifically, the course will therefore comprise: introductory lectures and discussions on the fundamental themes and guidelines of the theoretical pathway; guided analysis of the texts; days of active teaching with in-class exercises based on worksheets and audiovisual materials; moments of shared recapitulation on the basis of the outlines provided via power-point or with external interventions.

The course is delivered in Italian.

## Online and offline teaching materials

Course books, PowerPoint presentations, worksheets and other documents for individual exercises and group work, audio-visual materials.

## Programme and references

The course studies the importance of trust in the educational relationship, analysing in depth the various meanings of the concept and the different ways and levels in which it comes into play in educational processes today.
It therefore consists of the following three steps: 1. definition of the category; 2. social dimension of trust; 3. relational dimension of trust.
The first part of the course consists of a history of the idea aimed at reconstructing the scenarios of meaning and

the semantic network that holds the concept: trust, loyalty, confidence, challenge, faith, between the individual, relational dimension and the public sphere (Salvatore Natoli).
The second part of the course adopts Niklas Luhmann's systemic model in order to study how the production of trust and distrust are intertwined from the point of view of contemporary social dynamics, in what has been defined as the society of uncertainty.
The third part of the course delves minutely into the dynamics of trust in the relationship between you and I (based on Martin Buber's writings on education) and the study of its reversals, its crises, which are not to be confused with mere mistrust, i.e. with the opposite of trust, but which are to be interpreted as structural critical elements of trust itself (thanks to the writings of Vladimir Jankélévitch).

Bibliography

1. S. Natoli, Il rischio di fidarsi, il Mulino Bologna 2016 (167 pagine)
2. N. Luhmann, La fiducia, il Mulino Bologna 2002 (175 pagine)
3. M. Buber, Discorsi sull'educazione, Armando Editore, Roma, 2009 (70 pagine)
4. V. Jankélévitch, La menzogna e il malinteso, Cortina, Milano, 2010 (123 pagine)

OPTIONAL TEXT:
as a support text for understanding the concepts discussed in the course, we recommend reading M. Vergani, Dizionarietto di filosofia per educatori, Scholè/Morcelliana, Brescia, 2024 (it is not compulsory to study it for the exam).

The bibliography is for all.

## Assessment methods

*Attending students: oral exam.*

The final examination consists of an oral interview in which, in addition to verifying knowledge of the content of the volumes in the bibliography, the topics discussed during the course will be discussed. The ability to analyse, rework and apply the philosophical categories discussed will be assessed. The choice of the oral interview as exam mode is consistent with the teaching objectives, as it allows, thanks to a dialogical communicative situation, to interact with the student in order to assess his or her ability to critically understand the course topics.

There are no ongoing tests.

Elements considered for evaluation will be:
a. relevance of the answers
b. terminological appropriateness
c. coherence of argumentation
d. ability to identify and problematise theoretical issues and open questions.

*Non-attending students: oral exam*

As above, except that the questions will evaluate the student's knowledge of the prescribed reading materials without reference to the additional analysis conducted in class.
No intermediated tests are planned.

## Office hours

Prof. Vergani receives at studio no. 4146 Tel. 4896 U6 Floor, IV (please send an e-mail to the lecturer in advance, so that interviews can be arranged). Ordinary enquiries can also be requested by e-mail before or after class.

## Programme validity

The current programme is valid for two academic years.

## Course tutors and assistants

## Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION